

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 were withdrawn as a non-elected group in Paper No. 7. Claim 4 is herein cancelled. Claims 5 and 6 are herein added. Accordingly, claims 3 and 5 - 6 are presently pending in the application.

I. The Title

The title has been replaced in light of the objection alleging non-descriptiveness. Applicant believes the new title to explicitly indicate the invention to which the claims are directed.

II. Objections to Claims 3 and 4

The grounds of objection state that Applicant should clarify what is intended by “united at their ends” in claim 3. In response, Applicant has amended the language of claim 3 to recite the springs “being integral at their lengthwise ends with two continuous side strips. . .” Applicant submits that such amendment overcomes the grounds of objection. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this objection.

The grounds of objection also state that Applicant should clarify what is intended by “one only of its faces” in claim 3. In response, Applicant has amended the language of claim 3 to recite “wherein each spring includes at least two faces, and at least a central portion of one face of each spring is coated with an electrically conductive coating.” Applicant submits that such amendment overcomes the grounds of objection. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this objection.

The grounds of objection also state that claim 3 should clarify what is meant by “respective longitudinal axes.” For the following reasons, this objection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 recites the springs being displaced from a plane of said side strips by twisting about their respective longitudinal axes. By way of explanation, each respective spring possesses a respective axis. Each respective axis follows the lengthwise direction of each spring.

“Longitudinal” has an ordinary meaning that is generally defined as “[o]f or relating to . . . length . . .”¹ Accordingly, in light of the ordinary meaning of “longitudinal,” one of ordinary skill in the art would readily recognize that “their respective longitudinal axes” means the plurality of axes representing the respective lengthwise axis of each individual spring. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this objection.

The grounds of objection also state that claim 4 should clarify what is meant by “the side strips being pleated.” While claim 4 has been cancelled, obviating the objection as to that claim, claim 3 now includes similar subject matter that recites “the side strips are pleated . . .” For the reasons that follow, this objection is respectfully traversed.

“Pleated” has an ordinary meaning that is generally defined as “. . . an arrangement made by the doubling of one part over another . . .”² “Pleated” is also defined as a “fold . . . made by doubling the material upon itself . . .”³ In light of the ordinary meaning as previously stated, one

¹ The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (4th Ed., 2003).

² Roget’s II: The New Thesaurus (3rd Ed., 1995).

³ The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (4th Ed., 2003).

of ordinary skill in the art readily recognizes that “the side strips being pleated” means that the side strips are doubled over or folded back upon themselves. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this objection.

Claim 3 was also objected to for antecedent basis informalities, including “the plane of said strips” in line 4; “the length of the strip” in line 6; “the central portion of the spring” in line 8; and “the electrically conductive coating” and “the outside of the fold” in lines 12 - 13. In response, Applicant has amended in such manner as is believed to overcome such objections. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw these objections.

III. Claim Rejections -- 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 3 - 4 are rejected as allegedly anticipated by U.S.P. No. 4,191,445 (“Deal”). For the following reasons, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 has been cancelled, obviating the rejection as to this claim.

Independent claim 3 recites (among other things) side strips that are pleated and include a plurality of side tongues, the side tongues being of less thickness than the pleated side strips. At least these features are altogether absent in the prior art relied upon in the grounds of rejection.

The grounds of rejection compare Deal’s louvers, rails and side strips in figs. 4 and 11 to the pleated side strips of the instant invention. Specifically in relation to fig. 4, the louvers 10 (read as “springs” by the Examiner) are not connected or integral with side strips. Rather, louvers 10 are connected to rails 32. The rails clearly are not folded over upon themselves and therefore are clearly not “pleated.” In relation to fig. 11, while the louvers 110 are described as being integral with side strips 112, 114 (*see* col. 6, lines 28 - 39), the side strips 112, 114 do not double back or fold over on themselves. Accordingly, the side strips 112, 114 quite clearly are

not “pleated.” Indeed, the entire disclosure of Deal is deficient for failing to teach or even suggest anything that is pleated.

Moreover, Deal fails to teach or suggest the side strips including a plurality of side tongues, the side tongues being of less thickness than the pleated side strips. In light of the previous, it is averred that independent claim 3 possesses features and structure that are altogether absent in the prior art relied upon in the grounds of rejection. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

IV. New Claims 5 and 6

New independent claim 5 recites springs and side strips, wherein “a plane created by said at least two surfaces of said springs is oblique to a plane created by said first and second side strips, and wherein said side strips are pleated.” At least these features are altogether absent in the prior art. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this claim to issue.

New claim 6 is dependent upon claim 5 and is therefore averred to be patentable at least by virtue of such dependency. Further, new claim 6 recites “wherein said pleated side strips further include side tongues, said side tongues not being pleated and being of lesser thickness than said pleated side strips.” Because these features are altogether absent in the prior art, claim 6 is averred to be patentable at least for this additional reason.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the


AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 09/880,145

Attorney Docket No.: Q64797

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


Jason C. Beckstead
Registration No. 48,232

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: October 20, 2003